

# Being a voluntary patient in a mental health hospital



This easy read information sheet is about staying in hospital for **mental health treatment** as a **voluntary patient**.



**Mental health** is about how you think and how you feel.



**Treatments** are things that can make you feel better.



You are a **voluntary patient** if you choose to go to hospital for mental health treatment.



Your doctor might say that staying in hospital would be a good idea to help your mental health.



You can talk to

- your doctor
- your guardian
- your family
- a support person

They can help you decide if staying in a mental health hospital will help you.



But it is your choice whether you stay in hospital.



There is an easy read version of **your rights as a voluntary patient** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).



If you decide you need to stay at a mental health hospital it is called a **voluntary admission**.



**Admission** is the word for when you come to stay in hospital.



A hospital worker will put a wrist band on your arm with your name on it.

Name *R. Smith*

Address *224 West St*

*Manchester*

Phone Number

Usually there are forms to fill in when you arrive.



You can ask the hospital workers questions about staying in hospital and the treatment you will have.



**Mental health workers** must always tell you what your medical treatment is.

**Mental health workers** are people who work to help you with your mental health.



Mental health workers will ask you if it is OK before they start any treatment.

This is called asking for **consent**.



You might have to sign forms.

# Leaving Hospital



Leaving hospital is called **discharge**.

There are 2 reasons you can leave hospital

- finishing your treatment
- asking to be **discharged**



## Finishing your treatment

When you have finished treatment the mental health workers will talk to you about leaving hospital.



Mental health workers will help you make a plan.

## Asking to be discharged



If you do not want to stay in hospital you can tell mental health workers that you want to be discharged.



A doctor may talk with you to decide whether it is safe for you to leave.

Mental health workers can ask you to stay for up to 2 hours until a doctor comes.



There are usually forms to fill in before you leave hospital.

You can ask for help to fill out these forms.

## When you are not allowed to leave



If you become very unwell a doctor may decide that you need to stay in hospital longer to keep you safe.



If you are very confused or unwell you might have to stay even if you do not want to.

This is called an **involuntary patient** admission.



Being an **involuntary patient** is when you must stay in hospital for mental health treatment until you are well enough to go home.



There is an easy read information sheet about **Being an involuntary patient in a mental health hospital** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).

## If you have not been given the mental health care you need



If you have not been given the mental health treatment you need you have the right to tell someone.



If you are not happy with how hospital workers or other patients have treated you then you can tell someone.

You can tell someone you trust.



That might be

- a family member
- a friend
- a support person
- a hospital worker



You can also talk to an **Official Visitor**.

**Official Visitors** make sure people in hospital are treated well.

They do not work for the hospital.

Someone you trust can also talk to an Official Visitor.

This may be

- a family member
- a friend
- a support person



To make an appointment with an Official Visitor call **1800 208 218**.

It is free to call this number.

You can also ask someone you trust to call for you.



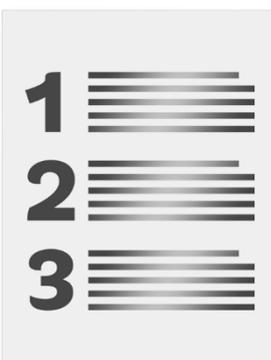
If you need help about the law you can call the Mental Health Advocacy Service.

Someone you trust can also call the Mental Health Advocacy Service.

The Mental Health Advocacy Service phone number is **9745 4277**.



There is an easy read information sheet about **Getting help** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).



There is a list of what some **words** mean in this information sheet **here** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).

## The NSW Mental Health Act- Voluntary admission to hospital

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This information sheet is part of a series of easy read resources explaining

- how people can access public mental health services in New South Wales and
- what they can expect.

For information on how to support people to use easy read see [Making mental health information accessible for people with intellectual disability – A Toolkit](#)

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